

**GOVERNOR JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM**

August 4, 2006

Hello, this is Governor Jennifer Granholm.

Can you believe it's already August! If your house is like mine, family conversation has already turned to going back to school much to my kids chagrin.

It's the time of year when kids worry about what clothes they need, whether their best friend will have the same class schedule and when sports practice starts.

And it's the time of year when parents worry about whether their children will be safe on the school bus and protected on the playground while they are out of our sight.

It doesn't matter if you're walking your children to the school bus or driving them to college – keeping our kids safe at whatever age is goal we all share as parents.

That's why we've worked hard over the last three years to enact tough, common sense policies that will keep our kids safe.

We're requiring background checks for all employees in schools and day care centers and prohibiting sex offenders from living or loitering near schools.

Earlier this year, parents got new tools to keep inappropriate email out of their kids' e-mail boxes

I was proud to sign "Jessica's law" creating tougher penalties for criminals who commit sex crimes against children

We've put Family Resource Centers in our schools to give families access to the support they need to be healthy and safe

And Project SAFE Neighborhoods has been rounding up fugitive felons and sex offenders to keep our neighborhoods safer too.

But there is more to do.

This week, I announced additional funding for the Metro Fugitive Task Force in Southeast Michigan. A joint operation of the Wayne, Oakland and Macomb County Sheriff's offices, that Task Force tracks down parole and probation violators and puts them back behind bars.

Since March, the Task Force has taken more than 160 offenders off our streets. With this additional funding, they can do even more.

Next week, we will announce additional initiatives that will make our children and our communities safer.

These initiatives build on the steps we've already taken so that all of our children are safe where they live, learn and play.

Thank you for listening.